



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

BACK-TO-SCHOOL OP ED

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Welcome to a new school year: Let's work to make our students world ready

By State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster

The excitement of a new school year brings so many opportunities: a new teacher, a different school, the chance to connect with friends, and the joy of learning. Our teachers, principals, and other school staff members are ready to make the 2008-09 school year the best ever.

Wisconsin has a long and proud tradition of supporting public education and preparing students to be productive contributors to our society. Education may have changed from the one-room schoolhouses of yesteryear, but there is still a common foundation. We want students who think critically, who can identify and solve problems, who know how to work together, who have a basic sense of ethics, and who can adapt to new situations.

These foundational skills must be grounded in a rigorous curriculum that provides subject area knowledge. We are working with two national consortiums—the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and the American Diploma Project—to ensure not just the rigor, but also the relevance of education in Wisconsin. All across the state, educators and community, government, business, and labor leaders are working together to ensure that all students graduate prepared for further education, the world of work, and their role as citizens. Through career and technical education, the arts, and service learning, our schools and teachers provide authentic learning experiences that are relevant to our students' educational needs and aspirations.

Education is changing to meet tomorrow's needs. The strength of our public schools directly contributes to the strength of our state and our economic well-being. Educated children become educated

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adults, who participate in the social, economic, and civic life of their community. It takes a united effort to prepare our children for the future. Let's work together to make the 2008-09 school year the best ever and to ensure all of our students graduate world ready.

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Elizabeth Burmaster is the elected state superintendent of public instruction.

NOTES: A high-resolution photo of the state superintendent is available on the Department of Public Instruction "Media Contacts and Resources" webpage at <http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/vm-media.html>. This editorial is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008_124.pdf.